



Finding focus
Three students share their perspectives on growing up in the military
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Off the chain
Rose Barracks residents and their pets enjoy newfound freedom, friends
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Bavarian News

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TOUCHDOWN TRAINING

Local youths gear-up and get down to grass tactics in Vilseck

Story and photos by
Molly Hayden
Staff Writer

VILSECK, Germany — More than 50 young sports enthusiasts had their game faces on as they blocked, ran and hot-dogged their way around the Vilseck High School football field during a football clinic here, April 2-3.

The two-day clinic brought young footballers, ages 8–18, together with players from the Frankfurt Universe, a semipro American football team out of Frankfurt, Germany.

Throughout the weekend, students practiced tackling, blocking, throwing and passing using the same techniques their instructors learned during the training season.

“This type of learning brings the kids to a new level. They get to experience what it is like to be coached at the same level we practice,” said Michael Williams, offensive coordinator for the team. “Our goal is for the kids to have fun and come away learning at least one new thing from this experience.”

After an hour of perfecting technique, students split up into two age groups to practice drills.

Fifteen-year-old Bryan Smith was no match for muscle-clad Andrew Ciukurescu, linebacker for the Universe, but he tried. Smith knelt down in front of 300 pounds of pure muscle. Ciukurescu smiled and reminded Smith that technique can



Vilseck High School students (right) face off with members of the Frankfurt Universe American football team during a football clinic at the high school, April 2.

overpower size. Smith then charged as he attempted to hold Ciukurescu back from the line of scrimmage.

Across the field, 14-year-old Kyle Cloutier snapped the ball, took three steps back and threw a tight spiral to receiver Anthony Maynard, 14, who caught it in stride.

Cloutier attributed his perfect pass to instructions he picked up earlier in the day.

“I learned a different way to hold the ball and how to position

See CLINIC, page 17



Eighth-grader Anthony Maynard catches the ball while seventh-grader Peyton Wilson blocks during a running drill, April 2. Both students attend Netzaberg Middle School.

For information on additional Month of the Military Child events in April, see page 8.

Housing office flexes to meet demand

By Charles Stadtlander
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — Though the community here is already recognized as one of the most tight-knit and hospitable in Europe, things will be getting a little tighter as two new tactical units move here in the coming months.

The 72nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion and the 7th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade Headquarters have already begun their transition to Schweinfurt. This brings more than 300 new families here over just a few months.

Also, four of Schweinfurt’s battalions are growing in strength prior to their pending deployments. With no major units scheduled to leave the Schweinfurt community, this means that available housing may be in short supply for families awaiting placement.

Luckily, the Directorate of Public Works’ housing division has developed several new initiatives to help deal with the demands of these new units as well as the regular flow of incoming military families searching for housing.

See HOUSING, page 17

Neumarkt partnership strengthened

By Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

NEUMARKT, Germany — For the first time in the history of the Hohenfels Military community, a garrison commander was invited to participate in the city council meeting of the County of Neumarkt as the “unofficial burgermeister of the 20th community of the county” last month.

“Normally being 20 out of 20 in a sport or academic endeavor is not something to celebrate. Today, I could not be prouder to stand before you as the representative of the 20th community of Neumarkt,” said Lt. Col. Kevin J. Quarles, USAG Hohenfels commander. “The significance of this honor will not diminish over time or with new garrison commanders.”

The invitation marks a deepening of the commitment for cooperation that began with the historic signing of the Sustainable Communities Partnership between USAG Hohenfels and Neumarkt County, the first such declaration between the U.S. Army in Europe and a host nation.

Quarles presented information on Hohenfels’ impact on the surrounding communities, including social, economic, leisure and travel, and education activities. Cooperation opportunities in the areas of renewable energy, environmental protection, and cultural enrichment were also discussed.

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INSIDE

Gaining Alp-titude

From paragliding to whitewater rafting, outdoor enthusiasts have their work cut out for them in Mayrhofen, Austria. See page 11

Penny power

Hohenfels students help bring educational opportunities to less fortunate children through the Pennies for Peace campaign. See page 14

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Hertling commands U.S. Army Europe

By Bruce Anderson
U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs

HEIDELBERG, Germany — Lt. Gen. Mark P. Hertling formally assumed command of U.S. Army Europe during a ceremony at Campbell Barracks here, March 25.

He is the 36th commander in USAREUR’s nearly 70-year history, and the first three-star general appointed by the U.S. government since 1952 to lead U.S. Army forces in Europe. Lt. Gen. Manton S. Eddy served as the commander from August 1952 until April 1953, when, according to the Army’s Command and General Staff College website, he presided over the command’s transformation from an Army of occupation to one of deterrence.

During the ceremony, Adm. James Stavridis, commander of U.S. European Command, passed the USAREUR colors to Hertling, symbolically passing responsibility for, and authority over, the unit to the new USAREUR commander.

After noting during his remarks that Hertling is a fan of the St. Louis Car-



Adm. James Stavridis, right, commander of U.S. European Command, passes the USAREUR colors to Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling during the assumption of command ceremony at Heidelberg’s Campbell Barracks, March 25.

dinals baseball team, Stavridis used a quote by the Cardinals’ manager Tony La Russa to describe Hertling’s qualifications.

“He’s got special talent and he’s got special attitude. Guys who have that play in the big leagues.”

Hertling returns to Europe from Fort Monroe, Va., where he was the deputy commanding general for Initial Military Training at U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

His history in USAREUR is long. After graduating from the U.S. Military Academy, Hertling served as a second

lieutenant with 64th Armor Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, in Schweinfurt in 1975. He has also served in Katterbach, Hanau, Grafenwoehr, and Wiesbaden, Germany.

During his remarks, Hertling described how he and his wife feel about being back in Heidelberg.

“My name is Hertling,” he said, “and I am a Soldier. It is a tremendous honor to serve in Europe, a place I consider my professional home, a place where Sue and I have so many fond personal memories.”

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Water Tower art by Dane Gray

Commander's Message



Sexual assault hurts 1, affects all

Gruess Gott! I'd like to start off by offering a warm Bavarian welcome to our new public affairs officer, Mike Blass, who joined the team last month. A former lieutenant colonel, he comes to the community after serving more than 20 years in the Air Force. His last post was as deputy director of public affairs for the Air, Education and Training Command at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. However, he and his wife Sarah are no strangers to Germany — he also served as the chief of wing public affairs at Ramstein Air Base and an action officer at U.S. European Command in Stuttgart.

I would like to specifically thank Nick D'Amario of the garrison's public affairs office for his diligence and leadership during the last six months when the public affairs officer position was gapped. Nick stepped up to the task and ensured we didn't miss a beat.

I'd also like to bid a fond farewell to the Joint Multinational Training Command's Command Sgt. Maj. Darieus A. ZaGara, who will be retiring after 31 years of dedicated military service. The public is invited to attend his change of responsibility ceremony tomorrow, April 14, at 4:30 p.m., at Main Post Parade Field.

The Grafenwoehr Military Community will sorely miss ZaGara, as he was integral in rejuvenating the Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer programs, including the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers, the NCO and Soldier of the Quarter/Year, and the Sgt. Morales Club. In addition, he was instrumental in creating and sustaining a monthly senior NCO forum that ensured the commander's intent was aligned with Soldiers' support requirements.

When asked for any parting advice, he said: "In light of the Soldier 360 and

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness programs, I'd encourage every Soldier, family member and civilian to become physically, mentally and spiritually fit because this Army, the mission, isn't getting any easier."

Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis C. Zavodsky will assume the position as the JMTC's command sergeant major. Zavodsky last served at Fort Richardson, Alaska, where he was the command sergeant major of the 25th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne).

Protecting the community

In addition to being the Month of The Military Child, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Nothing breaks up the Army team more than sexual assault — it negatively impacts the command climate and our units' sense of cohesion and teamwork. This year's theme is "Sexual Assault Hurts One and Affects All."

To raise awareness, the garrison will host several events this month, including:

■ April 27: Denim Day. A worldwide celebration, which began because of a famous sexual assault case in Italy in the 1990s, on this day participants wear denim to show support for victims of sexual assault.

■ April 30: Women's Self-Defense and Safety class, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Main Post Fitness Center.

■ April 30: Karaoke and Open Mic Night at the Rose Barracks' Warrior



Zone. Join the community's best (and worst) karaoke singers from 6-8:30 p.m., but stick around afterward when participants will deliver poems, raps and rhymes on topics relating to sexual assault and the Army's I.A.M Strong campaign.

Although we take time to focus specifically on sexual assault in April, Frank Pavone, the sexual assault response coordinator, and his staff at Army Community Service work year-round to ensure the community is informed and trained in being aware of the factors that cause sexual assault.

For more information on upcoming events, call Frank Pavone at 476-2650 or visit the Army's sexual Assault website at www.sexualassault.army.mil. As a reminder, those with sexual assault emergencies can call the 24-hour sexual assault emergency response hot line at 476-3217.

Find us on Facebook

Finally, I'd like to encourage the entire community to stay in touch and remain abreast of all the upcoming events by "friending" us on the garrison's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/USAGG or in the Facebook window on the garrison's website, www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

As our 2,000 friends already know, information and events like the recent grand opening of the dog park on Rose Barracks, are constantly added and updated, so don't be a stranger.

Thanks again for all you do to make this community great.

*Col. Vann Smiley
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr*

Defender 6 sends

Lynch addresses top 5 AFAP issues

ARLINGTON, Va. — Earlier this month, I discussed the progress we made resolving 17 of 40 quality-of-life issues at the AFAP General Officer Steering Committee. During the same week, AFAP delegates representing Army garrisons and commands worldwide met in our nation's capital to review and prioritize 88 quality-of-life issues that had been identified throughout the year at midlevel AFAP conferences across the Army.



As the assistant chief of staff for Installation Management and the overseer of the AFAP process, I had the privilege to speak to these delegates and impress upon them the great responsibility of identifying the most critical issues for the Army to work. Delegates were comprised of Soldiers, spouses, DA civilians, wounded warriors and survivors. Each brought their own ideas, perspectives and experiences to share in the decision making process.

The top five issues identified to senior Army leaders were: ID cards for surviving children with an active duty sponsor that annotate both active duty and survivor status; wounded warrior caregiver training; Medically retired service members' eligibility for concurrent receipt of disability pay; military Child Development Program fee cap; medical retention processing time restrictions for reserve component Soldiers.

The remaining 11 issues identified by the AFAP delegates are survivor, medical, family support and civilian personnel issues. I encourage you to learn more about these issues by visiting the Army OneSource website at <https://www.myarmyonesource.com/familyprogramsandservices>. Also, you can follow the progress on all issues that are currently being worked by selecting "Active Issue Search" at the bottom of the page and then search by issue number or keyword.

Our Army will not break because of its Soldiers, but it will break because of the stress placed upon our Soldiers and their families. Never before have we asked so much of our Army families. Because of this, the Army will continue to fully fund and staff Army family programs and keep our promise of providing Soldiers and families a quality of life that is commensurate with their service.

In order to ensure the promise is always kept, we must continue to identify inefficient, redundant or obsolete programs and services so we can redirect those resources to where we truly need them. I challenge each of you to help us in this endeavor. In the near future, I will communicate to you where and how you can help.

*Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch
Commander, Installation
Management Command*

And initial here, please

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Twenty-month-old Eleanor Zanercik places her best Jane Hancock on the dotted line, April 4. The 10 children present represented each of the Child, Youth and School Services facilities in U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr at the signing of the Month of the Military Child Proclamation to officially kick-off April as the Month of the Military Child. CYSS has special events planned all month long to celebrate the children of USAG Grafenwoehr.

Photo by Amy Zink



Army diversity maximizes team output

By Lt. Col. Kate Crusan
USAREUR Diversity Initiatives

Do you have diversity within your units? Do you even know what diversity is? The Army defines diversity as: "The different attributes, experiences and backgrounds of our Soldiers, civilians and family members that further enhance our global capabilities and contribute to an adaptive, culturally astute Army."

The Army diversity definition is very inclusionary. It goes way beyond the five protected classes of Equal Opportunity: race, religion, national origin, gender, color; and the seven of Equal Employment Opportunity, which adds age and disability. It takes into consid-

eration any "difference" that would represent a different way to solve any problem. It is at the core of what the Army Values stand for — that every member of the team is valued for their input.

The U.S. Army in Europe is an organization that routinely takes its members from a myriad of backgrounds and molds them into one cohesive mission focused team.

Diversity is about getting the most out of every member of our team and respecting and valuing their unique skill sets. Diversity is about good leadership and living and modeling the Army Values, the Warrior Ethos and the Civilian Corps Creed. Diversity also is about the unique and diverse makeup of our Army and our ability to harness that di-

versity into mission success — and we have been doing it for a long time.

Diversity can be seen as an essential element for every leader's toolkit; an element that, if taken advantage of, enables all leaders to adapt, remain ready and accomplish every mission. We all realize that the strength of the Army is our people. Diversity will make our Army that much stronger.

We can also look at diversity as a national security issue. No one can argue that today's security environment is complicated and demanding. The human dimensions of conflict are more dynamic than ever before. The unconventional and asymmetrical battlefields of the future mean that we must

See DIVERSITY, page 17

Was denkst du?

(What do you think?)



"A scientist ... with explosions!"

Townsend Durtschi
Age: 7



"A firefighter."

Emerson Durtschi
Age: 7 (+1 minute)



"A builder."

Bryce Gorman
Age: 6



"A pilot."

Caden Kannady
Age: 7



"A wrestler."

Daniel Maul
Age: 8

The *Bavarian News* asked the Netzaberg / Grafenwoehr Tiger Cubs:

What do you want to be when you grow up?

From sacrifices to success

Three students share their perspectives on growing up in the military

Vilseck High School students Payton Bodecker, Scott Hammel and Janet Thornton know the drill. They’re experts at balancing the demands of schoolwork and extracurricular activities.

However, each is still refining ways to deal with the trials and triumphs of life while their family member is deployed.



Bodecker still leading the pack

Story and photo by
Jeremy S. Buddemeier
Managing Editor

VILSECK, Germany — Vilseck High School senior Payton Bodecker has it made. A confident, well-spoken student and stellar athlete, she was accepted to every college for which she applied, and when she enters college this fall she will already have more than a semester’s worth of credit under her belt.

But it wasn’t always this easy.

In fact, the slender, 5-foot-11 Bodecker who was “always tall” didn’t even try out for track as a freshman because she didn’t think she had the ability. When she finally did try out the following year, she ran in the pack because she was afraid to lead it.

“With track, it’s a lot scarier because if you mess up, it’s just you,” she said.

Like most military children, Bodecker has had her share of PCS moves, new schools and endured the separation of deployment. However, these difficult situations became opportunities for her.

Gradually, by delving into schoolwork and athletics, she began to challenge herself and discovered not only new interests, but areas in which she excelled.

She signed up for several Advanced Placement classes, which allow students to receive college credit for courses like biology, literature and history prior to attending college. Likewise, she improved on the track. She has been the captain of the track team for two years running and now mentors underclassmen.

“You get better every year,” Bodecker said. “Now I just start out (races) leading the pack.”

Still, being separated from her father, Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Bodecker of the 3rd

Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, has been tough, especially this year.

“There have been a lot of changes in my life ... and when I do well at a track meet, he’s not there to see me,” she said.

But when they are together, the family finds ways to make the most of their time. This past summer, Bodecker leased a horse named Goldsteen in Hahnbach. She and her father went riding on the weekends, and in addition to patience, also learned some German.

“You need a lot of support when riding and my dad really helps,” Bodecker said. “He shows he cares by all the little things he does.”

In addition, the family takes trips together, but Bodecker said she enjoys spending time together at home, just being together.

And though they’re apart now, one piece of fatherly advice has stuck with her.

“I know it sounds cliché, but he says ‘Always do everything 100 percent.’ On the track when I’m tired and coach isn’t watching, I still keep going.”

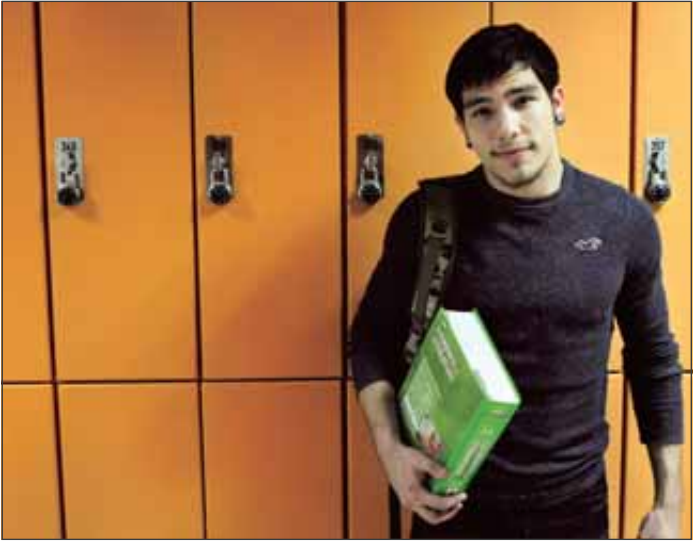
Within a few months, the family will be reunited, track season will be over, and Payton Bodecker will leave for college.

In late March, having already been accepted at University of Wisconsin, University of Massachusetts, University of Puget Sound, University of Kentucky and University of Colorado, she was still waiting to hear from the University of Georgia.

Then, shortly after her first track meet, she found out she had been accepted to UGA. Rather quickly and confidently, she chose Georgia.

“I knew that’s where I was going,” she said.

Bodecker plans to study political science, but is open to the possibility of changing majors once she gets there. Either way, when that time comes, there’s no doubt she’ll take it in stride.



It’s Hammel time at Vilseck High

Story and photo by
Molly Hayden
Staff Writer

VILSECK, Germany — Scott Hammel is as high school hipster as they come. His dark jeans wrap tightly around his calves and a small bird lingers in the upper left-hand side of his fitted sweater. His hair falls neatly to the right and the hint of a mustache and beard creep across his upper lip and chin, respectively.

Hammel walks with confidence and talks with passion. You know when he enters a room, mainly because he engages you; whether with a smile or conversation. He’s warm and welcoming to fellow students and says his “lunch table is always open.”

“Making friends here is easy, we all share a similar situation,” said the 18-year-old Vilseck High School senior. “Plus it’s easy to be nice, to just be a good guy.”

Perhaps it’s this personality that got him elected as student body president. Who wouldn’t vote for someone who claims to “Rock your Scotts off.”

Since being elected, Hammel instituted a recycling program, scheduled numerous pep rallies and planned a variety of after-school events. His goal as student body president is to create a support system among the students to show school spirit.

“We try to fill the falcon fund and have a little fun,” said Hammel.

In addition to boosting stu-

dent morale, Hammel works with the Student 2 Student program, helping new arrivals adjust to new surroundings.

“The hardest part of being with the military is moving around a lot, I think any military kid will tell you that,” said Hammel. “But on the plus side we are given a unique opportunity to travel and experience things that other high school kids can’t.”

“I want everyone to enjoy their time here, that’s what is comes down to,” he said.

Hammel is a self-proclaimed professional when it comes to being a military brat. His family has been a part of the Army community since he was a child. Hammel lives with his mother and stepfather, Lt. Cols. Michael and David McCully, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment. His father, Capt. Kai Hammel, 18th CSSB, lives a few houses down. Hammel’s mother is currently deployed.

“I always wanted to be an officer in the Army. I always thought that’s what I wanted to do,” said Hammel. “It runs in the family.”

Although his career choice has since wavered, he appreciates the lessons being a part of a military community has taught him.

“The Army showed me how to be independent,” said Hammel. “To live to my full potential.”

So what does the future hold for Hammel?

“I want to be a teacher, most likely World History,” he said. “Academically, I was not always the best kid, so I want to be a role model, keep a good image and push what strengths I do have.”



Thornton, new to the military, sings stress away

Story and photo by
Amy Zink
Assistant Editor

VILSECK, Germany — For most Vilseck High School students, growing up in the military is a way of life — the only way of life that they have ever known.

However, this isn’t the case for 10th-grader Janet Thornton. She is new to being a military child, and for the last 1 ½ years, Thornton has lived in Vilseck with her aunt, Sgt. 1st Class Levita Staples, and uncle, Sgt. 1st Class Terrence Staples.

Like other military kids, Thornton is experiencing the trials of deployment while her uncle is deployed with 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

Thornton has taken on the role of big sister in a hectic household where she is busy helping her aunt and her six young cousins, ages 2-10, navigate the deployment, while also trying to keep her grades up at school and participate in extracurricular activities.

Being a military child isn’t easy for Thornton, who misses her mother in the U.S., but she believes being active in school and with her family helps. Thornton also says she was comfortable being new at a military school because “kids know what you’re going through and it’s easier to become friends.”

Last year, Thornton was instrumental in restoring the dance team at VHS and this year she is spending her extracurricular time in honors choir and is focusing on her grade point average. Thornton believes being involved in school is important for successfully coping with the deployment of a parent or family member.

When it comes to relieving deployment stress, Thornton sings.

“I always tryout to sing the national anthem at sporting events, and I sing every day to make myself happy,” said Thornton.

Thornton knows she isn’t the only one in her household feeling the stress of her uncle’s deployment and does what she can to help out her aunt and her young cousins.

“I see my uncle as a father, and when they’re sad, I’m sad. We really hang out together and have family time. We watch movies and laugh a lot,” said Thornton. “I sing to my cousins, too.”

A first-time Department of Defense Dependent Schools-Europe student, Thornton is a quick learner and has some advice for incoming kids: “Get involved in activities and find a hobby that fits your personality.”

VHS offers Student 2 Student, a sponsorship program that helps kids to integrate into their new school. The S2S program was one of Thornton’s first impressions of VHS when she arrived and it introduced her to her first good friend at the school. Thornton says they are still friends to this day.

Teachers at VHS are also important to Thornton, and she feels they really understand what military kids are going through during deployments.

Her English teacher, Rebecca Connolly, has become like a parent to Thornton at school.

Thornton explains that “she is always checking up on me and my grades. Ms. Connolly wants to make sure that everything is OK with me.”

With the composure and sage knowledge of someone much older than a 10th-grader, Thornton has one last piece of advice for military kids facing a deployment: “Make time for you,” she said. “Make school a priority, but also time for yourself. Hang out with friends and talk about what’s happening.”

It looks like Janet Thornton has been a military child and VHS Falcon all figured out.

Story Hour ignites learning

Story and photo by
Molly Hayden
Staff Writer

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The crowd was small — pun intended. Fourteen tiny tots ranging from a few months to a few years old gathered in the Main Post Library for the weekly “Story Hour,” March 17.

The jam-packed hour kept kids on their tiny toes and focused on preliterate skills including introducing them to the texture and function of books and letter awareness.

Additionally, the pint-sized participants, with help from their caregivers, sang the ABC’s, learned a new letter and number and danced to the tune of learning.

It’s important to introduce

Story Hour is open to children up to 5 years old and takes place Tuesdays at the Rose Barracks Library, 10-11 a.m.; and Thursdays at the Main Post Library, 10- 11 a.m. For more, call 475-1740 (Main Post), or 476-1740 (Rose Barracks).

children to books at a young age and ignite the various senses that go along with reading, according to JoAnn Ogreenc, public service librarian at the Main Post library.

“Each week we present something new for the kids,” said Ogreenc. “They listen to the stories and participate in various activities that allow



(From left) Rylee Mize, Lexie and Aiden Smith follow along in their books as they listen to a story being read aloud during Story Hour.

them to think and learn.”

Story Hour also focuses on socialization, a value for Ashlee Mize and her two young daughters, 3-year-old Rylee and Karsee, 18 months.

“Their education and interactions are very important to me,” said Mize. “I want to expose them to these types of learning experiences before they enter school.”

As the hour neared an end,

the children gathered around Ogreenc, wide-eyed, as she enthusiastically read “How Rocket Learns to Read,” an imaginative story of about a furry dog learning the tricks of reading. While garnering grins and giggles from the crowd, the imaginative story also hid an important lesson — if a dog can learn to read, these petite pupils shouldn’t be too far behind.

For more information on upcoming Month of the Military Child events in your community, see page 8.

“Make Environmental Protection Easy!”

Ten ways you can help the environment

Try riding a bike or walking for short trips

According to a national survey from the U.S. Department of Transportation half of all auto trips Americans make are less than 2 miles long. The survey found that drivers took an average of 7 trips in the car each day. Just under one third of the trips were one mile or less which means two of the trips were on mile could have been a very short, easy bike ride.

On both the Grafenwoehr Main Post and Rose Barracks almost every facility is less than a 10 minute walk from the commissary facilities.

Besides saving fuel expenses and reducing the amount of carbon emissions that destroy trees and create greenhouse gases you'll save yourself the time finding a parking space around the facilities you visit. Grafenwoehr and the region surrounding it is a pleasant and picturesque place to enjoy the outdoors.

Avoid needlessly idling your car

When you start your car engine, it is pointless to run it while remaining stationary in order to “warm it up.” Not only is it wasteful and loud, according to German traffic law, unnecessary idling of motor vehicles is prohibited and can be punishable by large fines. Instead, just drive gently for a few miles: the engine will warm up while avoiding needless air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to the greenhouse effect and accelerate global warming. Being mindful of your car's idling also saves you money whenever you fill up your car at the pump.

Take part in the Grafenwoehr community Recycling Program

Take advantage of the many recycling centers and receptacles provided near your home and on post throughout the Grafenwoehr and Vilseck housing areas, and throughout the local German community. Separating paper, glass and other recyclables is easy once you learn the basics.

Easy to use practical publications, including helpful guidance on disposal of electronic and electrical waste such as computer monitors and home appliances, as well as how to sort household hazardous wastes are available for download at the Web url listed below.

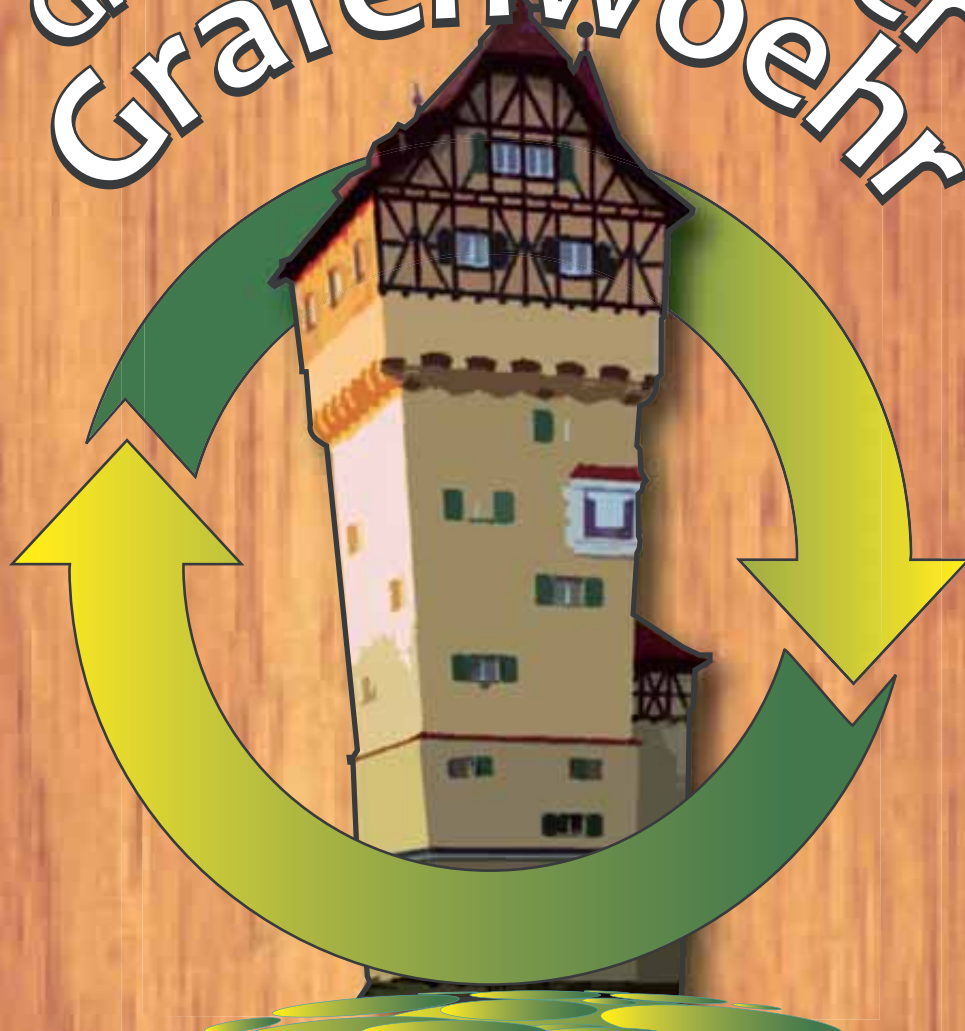
Find the proper place for “everyday trash”

In the training area Soldiers are required to police the range of their trash and spent shells before leaving the site. Whether on or off post civilians and family members should remember to use the same consideration. Find a proper trash receptacle or bag and take your trash with you if you are leaving an area. It's the courteous thing to do.

Turn the tap off while you brush your teeth, do the dishes or while washing your hands

When a tap is turned on, 5 to 15 gallons of pure drinking water flow out every minute. Water conservation is easy once you and your family develop the right habits. Water conservation is also a utility money saver at the end of the year. When using the faucet try to use only the water you need and be mindful of how much is going needlessly down the drain.

Growing a greener
Grafenwoehr



U.S. Army Grafenwoehr Directorate of Public Works,
Environmental Division

Protecting Soil, Air and Water and Supporting the Training Mission

The Grafenwoehr Military community has one of the most active and comprehensive environmental programs in the U.S. Army. The Directorate of Public Works (DPW) Environmental Division and Operations and Maintenance Division reaches out to educate, encourage, and promote environmental awareness to Soldiers, family members and civilians.

At Grafenwoehr facilities, environmental protection is an integral part of of operational activities. Through diligent programs which focus on responsible stewardship and conservation of the natural habitat, including air, soil and water contamination prevention and clean-up, hazardous waste disposal, protection of endangered species and promoting good recycling practices and processes, the Grafenwoehr DPW makes environmental protection easy, which helps community members of all ages to actively take part in protecting the environment while supporting the JMTC training mission.

Grafenwoehr
Earth Day



12 May
2011

Carpool to work and try taking the train on your next vacation

Carpooling is a great way to get around and help the environment and save money at the same time. Ask around your unit or office if someone is driving the same or similar route to and from work each day.

When you plan your next European vacation try using the German train system. The trains are reliable, clean and comfortable. Most all main train stations (Hauptbahnhofs) are located in or within easy walking distance of the heart of the city. Special rates for families on holiday make for economical stress-free vacation travel. Single Soldiers should consider buying a train card (BahnCard) which reduces fares on all destinations. Special regional fares and train times are listed available in English online at www.bahn.de. To purchase tickets there are always service desks or automatic kiosks to enable you pay for your fare prior to boarding the train.

Switch off lights you don't need

Try to make a point of switching off lights that don't need to be on whether at home or in the office, especially when you leave a room, and try using daylight instead whenever it is practical to do so. The less energy that is used, the less energy is needed and over a year that adds up to big savings for you - and for the United States Army.

Dry clothes the old fashioned way whenever possible

Of all household electrical appliances, the clothes dryer consumes the most energy. It requires two to three times as much power as the washing machine. The most environmentally friendly way to dry clothes is to do it the old fashioned way on a line, or on a inexpensive folding rack designed for clothes drying. You can find such racks available for purchase at most all military PXs.

Properly dispose of batteries - especially your old car batteries

All batteries contain lead and acids, two substances particularly toxic and harmful to the soil. Car batteries left in the countryside pollute 50 square feet around it for several years. Lead used in batteries is the largest remaining source of lead pollution in the environment. To recycle your smaller batteries use the designated bins around the community. For automobile batteries the MWR Auto Skills Center and AAFES Car Care center have easy to use recovery drop off points to properly dispose of your used or spent car batteries.

Recycle plastic water, milk and soft drink bottles

Most plastic bottles today are made of PET (polyethylene terephthalate) which is easy to recycle. At home, in the office, or when travelling, be sure to recycle plastic beverage bottles.

Encourage your office to start a recycling program if it doesn't have one. Recycling a single bottle saves enough energy to keep a 60 watt bulb lit for over 6 hours.

For more information on DPW programs and events, publications, and environmental policies in the Grafenwoehr community visit us on the Internet at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil/usag_dpw

MRE prepares 172nd for upcoming deployment



Soldiers with U.S. Army Europe's 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery, 172nd Infantry Brigade, fire an M777 howitzer during a defensive fire exercise at the Grafenwoehr Training Area, March 26. The Soldiers of the 172nd participated in a Mission Rehearsal Exercise to prepare for their deployment to Afghanistan.

1-77th Artillery Soldiers reunited with their guns

Story and photo by
Spc. Joshua Leonard
*U.S. Army Europe Office of the
Chief of Public Affairs*

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Soldiers of U.S. Army Europe's Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, 172nd Infantry Brigade, conducted a defensive fire training exercise here, March 26.

The battery is part of U.S. Army Europe's 172nd Infantry Brigade, and the live-fire training here was part of a larger Mission Rehearsal Exercise aimed at preparing the 172nd for its upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

The Soldiers of Alpha Battery normally operate the M109A6 Paladin, a veteran piece that has been in service since Vietnam, but are now training on the relatively new M777 howitzer. Both sport 155 mm guns, but while the Paladin is a self-propelled behemoth on tracks, the towed M777 better matches what the Schweinfurt-based unit will fire in the Afghan hills. The down side is that while the Paladin has an auto-loading system, the rounds for the M777 must be prepared and loaded by hand.

Because the battery does not have M777s of its own, the artillerymen are training with guns borrowed from USAREUR's 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

The M777 howitzer fires a round that weighs in at 98.45 pounds, has a 150-meter kill radius and can level a building if needed. Although they are typically used for indirect fire, the defensive fire training was different.

In an indirect fire operation the cannon crew calculates the azimuth and elevation angles and fires at the

target, often firing at objectives so far away that they never actually get "eyes on" the target. In a direct fire mission crews rely on seeing the target to make their adjustments and affect where the round hits.

Capt. John Benner, the Alpha Battery commander, said his Soldiers have experience using the towed guns for defensive fire, but added that the technique is unusual.

"The usual method for deploying the M777 is in indirect fire mode. Now we have to be able to provide indirect fire and we also have to be able to defend ourselves," he said.

Because the need for direct fire missions in combat has increased, artillery Soldiers are focusing more on training using base defense scenarios that stress direct fire techniques.

The crew will get back to its primary business — artillery missions — during its upcoming combat tour. During its previous deployments they left their Paladins behind and operated as infantry Soldiers.

Staff Sgt. James Cook, a howitzer section chief, said it feels outstanding to be able to do his job again. He said the defensive fire exercise is exciting because it puts the battery closer to the action.

"It's fun to actually get to see everything like this off the triple seven," said Cook. He couldn't resist a bad artillery pun. "It's a blast," he added.

Teamwork plays a huge role in the military, and Benner said it's no different in the field artillery world.

The two-week MRE was designed to prepare the 172nd for Afghanistan, but Benner said it's already a done deal for Alpha Battery.

"We are ready," he said.



Photos by Sgt. Joel Salgado

An M240 gunner provides over watch while Soldiers establish a perimeter during an air assault mission for the 172nd Infantry Brigade's Mission Rehearsal Exercise, March 27.

Soldiers sharpen their skills for long haul ahead in Afghanistan

By U.S. Army Europe
Public Affairs
News Release

HOHENFELS, Germany — Soldiers with U.S. Army Europe's 172nd Infantry Brigade participated in a two-week Mission Rehearsal Exercise at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center here to prepare for deployment to Afghanistan.

MREs ensure Soldiers, leaders and units understand Afghanistan's operational environment by involving deploying units in a variety of exercises involving U.S. and partner military forces, said Maj. Nick Sternberg, the JMRC public affairs officer.

"The great thing about conducting an MRE at Hohenfels is it very closely mirrors the environment that the brigade will face in Afghanistan," said Col. Edward Bohnemann, the commander of the 172nd.

During the exercise, Soldiers from the 172nd conducted live-fire exercises, air assault missions, base defense operations and mounted and

dismounted patrols with European military forces.

To prepare them to work with multinational forces, the 172nd trained with soldiers and police from Poland, Romania, Afghanistan, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, France, Germany and Bosnia during the exercise.

"The Soldiers and leaders should leave this MRE feeling very confident of their abilities," said Bohnemann. "There should be no doubt from anybody in the formation that we are ready for the challenges that lay ahead of us."

The Mission Rehearsal Exercise ended April 8.

Right, above: Soldiers with U.S. Army Europe's 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry, 172nd Infantry Brigade, establish security at their landing site and provide cover fire (below) during the unit's Mission Rehearsal Exercise, March 27. In addition to training with coalition forces, 172nd Soldiers conducted live-fire exercises and mounted patrols in preparation for their mission in Afghanistan.



500th Engineer Company 'Titans' provide support in Kuwait

Story and photo by
1st Lt. Michael Johnson
15th Engineer Battalion

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — Since late October 2010, the 500th Engineer Company has been providing construction support throughout Kuwait, enabling base camps across the country to maintain critical operations. Many of these operations directly support ongoing stabilization efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan through the coordination of supplies, equipment and personnel.

The 500th Engineer Company, known affectionately as "The Titans," primarily uses heavy earthmoving equipment. In the short time since their arrival, they have conducted 12 construction missions with a total value of almost \$850,000 in troop labor and equipment. During the course of their missions, they hauled and spread over 35,000 cubic meters of gravel and fill material.

"We've had some unique opportunities to work with the Kuwaitis since we got here," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Seelow, 3rd Platoon sergeant. "For most of our Soldiers, sitting down in a tent between shifts and sipping Arabic coffee with some of the local nationals is a completely new experience that they wouldn't normally get. We learn a lot from each other."

"You really feel like our missions are directly contributing to the overall security of both our own footprint, and our host nation," said Sgt. 1st Class Duane Doran, 2nd Platoon sergeant. "For our current mission, the Soldiers can be proud to have a very tangible impact on



the bigger defensive picture in our operations."

Missions have included significant force protection development, maintenance and repair of logistical routes, joint missions with the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense-Military Engineering Projects, and housing expansion to facilitate transitioning units as the transfer of responsibility in Iraq and Afghanistan is implemented.

"The construction missions we did back in Schweinfurt, while serving a different strategic purpose, definitely gave us a basic foundation in the skills required for the types of missions we find ourselves executing out here," said 1st Lt. Marc Sterling, executive officer of the company.

Despite the careful preparation and training, Kuwait is inescapably a very different environment than Germany, and comes with its own

Staff Sgt. Mark Gilbert, a construction equipment supervisor, oversees a stockpile site at Ali Al Salem, Kuwait. During his 12-hour shifts, he monitors the loading of dump trucks as they haul construction materials to a newly cleared gravel road on the outskirts of the camp.

challenges. Staff Sgt. Vincent Buckley, section leader in 1st Platoon, compared the operating environment to his previous deployments to Afghanistan.

"The ground here is different from anywhere else I've ever been. We have to bring in a lot of outside material to stabilize the soil, which is something a lot of us have never really had to deal with before." Many of Buckley's Soldiers are on their first deployment.

"It's a different experience," he continued. "In Afghanistan, the construction we did was very hasty and very practical. Here, the process is always deliberate, with careful planning and coordination for every phase. It's a different type of construction for a different operating environment."

Additionally, the heavy dust and sand from the desert can cause faster degradation of the equipment, grinding at joints and internal mechanisms if left unchecked.

"Maintenance is a key focus for the company leadership," said Company 1st Sgt. Sean Nichols.

"Our company's mission directly depends on our equipment, so we have to look at maintenance as our lifeline. The equipment we initially received wasn't in the best shape, but by emphasizing constant maintenance every day, we've seen that deadline report shrink drastically."

"For me, one of the biggest challenges has actually been working with other units," explained Staff Sgt. Raymond Brouillard, section sergeant in 3rd Platoon.

"We're the first construction battalion this theater has seen in a long time; other units are used to depending on civilian contractors for their construction, and they've gotten good at working together. The Army's pretty much a well-oiled machine, but we fit into that machine a little bit differently than the contractors, and it just takes some adjusting to get it running at peak efficiency again."

"There were — and still are, a lot of unknowns coming into this deployment," concluded Nichols. "We're in a unique environment, and there's always the possibility of another mission sending us somewhere new. But fortunately, our Soldiers and leaders are adaptable and ready for any challenge. That's the great thing about being an Engineer, and that's the hallmark of being a Titan."

Art awareness



Photo by Nick D'Amario

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Judges for the DXM Awareness Art Contest hold up the winning entry by Netzaberg eighth-grader Daniel Rider. Judges, from left, are Tamara Smiley, Irma Vasquez, Sonya Jordan and Nancy Nolin. The contest winner and runners-up will be recognized at the upcoming Community Huddle, April 28. Art from all contest entries will be on display around the Grafenwoehr Military Community.

‘The Encores’ farewell one of their own

By Renate Gradl
Der Neue Tag

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — “Time to say good-bye” actually is not a song in their repertoire. Nevertheless, the singers of the German-American choir “The Encores” had to say good-bye again. This time it was Spc. Barbara Thompson, former finance specialist with the 106th Financial Management Company, who recently PCS-ed to Colorado.

Thompson was first stationed at Vilseck in 2006 and returned to Grafenwoehr in 2008. With her beautiful soprano voice, she enjoyed the weekly rehearsals at the Lutheran community center, as well as memorable performances at the Grafenwoehr and Weiden Advent Markets, celebrations on Grafenwoehr’s Main Post, and the farewell of Chaplain Guenter Daum. More recently, she experienced how Fasching is celebrated in the Upper Palatinate.

“I had plenty of fun dressing up as a Mexican, but also as an angel or a nun,” she said,

making reference to “Weiberfasching.” The closest celebration the United States has is the Mardi Gras Parade in New Orleans.

“Actually, I am not really a party animal, but I enjoyed Fasching. It was really crazy,” Thompson said with a smile.

In addition to traveling around Germany, the 34-year-old specialist visited cities all over Europe, including Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, Poland, Luxemburg, Spain and Turkey. She said Germany was her favorite though.

Recently, the Encores bid her farewell and sang Thompson’s favorite song “Hallelujah” from Shrek during the last rehearsal. Thompson, however, didn’t leave without providing a parting gift. Thanks to her, the choir now also has a male voice: Chaplain (Maj.) Stan Copeland, who is the Lutheran chaplain of the military community Vilseck.

“It’s an unusual situation with all the ladies, but I love the traditional German songs and I love to sing,” Copeland said. Of course, he would be happy to get more male sup-



Barbara Thompson (seated, bottom center in blue) poses with “The Encores” while celebrating her 34th birthday. The Encores sing everything from gospels to musicals and are always looking for new singers. The group practices Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall of the Lutheran Church, right outside of Gate 1 on Martin-Luther-Strasse in Grafenwoehr. The rehearsals are held in German and English; there are no auditions. For more, call Ingrid Knodt at 09641-2903, 0175-344-3266 or visit www.encores.de.

port singing with the choir.

“The Encores” have to let Thompson go with sadness in their hearts, but maybe they will see her again. With a big smile, she accepted the farewell gift, a T-shirt that states

“Upper Palatinate – some simply say Oberpfalz,” which will always remember her of her times in Grafenwoehr.

Editor’s Note: Ingrid Knodt, Army National Guard Affairs Office, translated.

What’s Happening

Garmisch Briefs

Erdinger Therme

April 16: Enjoy a therapeutic, relaxing, calming, and exhilarating time with lots of good fun at the water park. Cost: transportation \$15; park entry cost about 38 €.

Opera

April 20: Bellini’s “Norma” with Editia Gruberova in the title role. Cost: \$12 for transportation, tickets from 9-100 €.

Prague

April 22-25: Enjoy a guided daytime tour Saturday and a fair amount of free time, plus a special guided tour of the Franz Kafka museum. Departs at 4:15 p.m. Cost: \$370.

Venice & Verona

April 29-May 16: On Saturday, visit Venice with its great art and architecture, pigeons in St. Mark’s Square, gondolas and good food. On Sunday, it is off to Verona and a tour of the Romeo and Juliet city with the great Roman Arena. Cost: \$290 (museum entrances, food, public transportation extra).

Urbino

May 27-30: Visit a true Renaissance jewel and birthplace of Raphael and Bramante. See the Ducal Palace, commonly regarded as one of the best structures from the Renaissance period. Visit Perugia, home of wonderful chocolate confections, take in the magnificent views and see the wonderful architecture. Cost: \$475, \$150 deposit due by April 15.

Unless noted, all FMWR events meet at the Pete Burke Center. To register for the events contact the staff at the Pete Burke Community Center, DSN 440-2638, CIV 08821-750-2638, or e-mail us at Garmisch.FMWRodr@us.army.mil.

The Pete Burke Community Center also provides space available transportation to and from the opera house for those who just want the evening in Munich. Cost: \$12.

Operation Baby Shower

April 25, 10 a.m. – noon.: To

celebrate April being the Month of the Military Child, the ACS Family Advocacy’s New Parent Support Program invites you to Operation Baby Shower.

The event combines fun with education and is tailored to expectant couples and families with children up to the age of three. Among fascinating presentations Pre-registration is required.

Free child care (space available) at the CDC for registered children — call 08821-750-2684, DSN 440-2684 to reserve. Limited supervision will also be provided at the chapel’s nursery playroom.

National Denim Day

April 27: join the Family Advocacy Program and wear denim to work to support National Denim Day! Wearing jeans on that day is a symbol of protest of harmful attitudes about rape.

This goes back to a judge overturning a rape conviction because he believed the victim would have had to help the perpetrator to remove her jeans.

A national campaign was developed to bring awareness to the fact coercion threats and force is a part of the act of rape. For more information go to <http://denim-dayusa.org/> or visit ACS.

Graf/Rose Barracks Briefs

MOMC Events

April 19: CYSS School Age Center Movie Madness Field Trip

April 20: CYSS Youth Center-Italy Express Trip.

April 20: CYSS 2nd Annual Block Party 2:30-4:30 p.m.

April 21: Netzaberg School Age Center Mega Play Day Trip

April 21: Rose Barracks School Age Center-Bowling Extravaganza

April 30: CYSS Community Wide Kinderfest Celebration. (Rose Barracks School Center, Bldg. 2237) from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

For more or to register, contact USAG Grafenwoehr Parent Central Services at DSN 475-6736, CIV 09641-83-6736 (Main Post) or 476-2760, CIV 09662-83-2760 (Rose Barracks); or stop by in person at Main Post Bldg. 244, Suite 117, from 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; or Rose Barracks Bldg. 224, 1st Floor,

from 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Online registration: <https://webtrac.mwr.army.mil/webtrac/grafwenwoehrcyms.html>.

Estate claims

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Cpl. Donald Mickler of Regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 4th Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, should contact 2nd Lt. J. Wesley Sparks, summary court-martial officer, at DSN 476-5252 or jerry.wesley.sparks@us.army.mil.

‘Egg’stravaganza

April 24: The Vilseck Community and Spouses’ Club is hosting an Easter Egg Hunt, at 1 p.m. for 2 age groups 1-5 years and 6 to 10 years at Big Mike Park, Rose Barracks. Additionally available, pictures with the Easter Bunny, jumpy castle, face painter, DJ, food and drinks.

We are also looking for FRGs or private organizations to sell food as a fundraiser. Volunteers also needed to help. E-mail jenniferhoover1@hotmail.com.

Consular Outreach

April 28: The Grafenwoehr Passport Office, in conjunction with the U.S. Consulate in Frankfurt, will be accepting Report of Birth & Tourist Passport applications from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m., at Rose Barracks, Bldg. 134, Multipurpose Building.

Representatives from DHS, USCIS, immigrant visas, social security administration and veterans’ benefits will also be available.

For more, call DSN 475-8699, CIV 09641-83-8699, or by contacting us by e-mail at DLIMCOM-EGrafenwoehrMPD-Passports@eur.army.mil.

Dog Days of Summer

May 21: Join us at Rose Barracks’ Little Mike Park, starting 11 a.m., for a fun event featuring contests for all doggie sizes and shapes (trophies and prizes for winners), free pet treats, food and drink for community members, plus MC’ing by DJ Mark Carr.

The USAG Grafenwoehr Vet Clinic will also be on site to provide free pet registration, flea and tick products, spay/neuter information and more. The event is hosted by the USAG Graf Veterinary Facility and the Vilseck Community and Spouses’ Club.

Hohenfels Briefs

MOMC Events

April is the Month of the Military Child. and CYSS and Family and MWR facilities will be holding events and specials throughout April to celebrate and recognize the children and families of the military. Below are a few of the events to look forward to.

When you attend these events, you are eligible to receive a raffle ticket to win a Kinect for Xbox 360. The winner will be announced at 6 p.m. during Family Day at the Volksfest:

April 15: Bouncer day at the Post Gym, noon-4:30 p.m. followed by family bingo at the CAC, 5-7 p.m.

April 16: Friendship bracelet class at Arts and Crafts, 11 a.m. to noon, \$10 per person.

April 16: Free family movie screening at the AAFES Theater, 2 p.m.

April 18: Family field trip to Palm Beach.

April 28: Family Day at the Volksfest, half price for all rides.

Winner of the Kinect for Xbox 360 raffle will be announced at 6 p.m. in the main fest tent. Must be present to win.

Spring Break

April 18-22: The Hohenfels Elementary and Middle/High School students will be on Spring Break from April 18-22. There will be no school for students that week. For more information, call Veronica at the Elementary school DSN 466-2829, CIV 09742-83-2829, or Anna at the Middle/High School DSN 466-3162, CIV 09472-83-3162.

Safe Child Program

April 18 to 29: In recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month, Army Community Service Family Advocacy Program is offering the Safe Child Program to children in grades K-3.

This program is a comprehensive curriculum which teaches prevention of sexual, emotional and physical abuse by people who are known to the child, prevention of abuse and abduction by strangers, and safety in self-care.

The program is positive, non-explicit and non-threatening. It teaches children the skills that they need to reduce vulnerability, raise self-esteem and improve

self-reliance.

Parents are asked to attend the one hour class with their children from 3:30-4:30 p.m. at ACS, Bldg 10. Call Patricia Scott, FAP specialist, at DSN 466-4908 or Priscilla Fleischer at DSN 466-4907 for more information or to sign up.

Paintball

April 23: Ready, aim, fire. Play paintball Saturday, April 23 between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Warrior Way by the shoppette. Participants must be 18 or older to play. Field fee is \$10, paintball marker rental is \$10, paint is \$55/case (2,000 rounds), or \$35/half-case (1,000 rounds).

If you bring your own paintball marker, it must be in compliance with German law. Dress in appropriate clothing, camouflage and BDUs are prohibited.

Call Outdoor Recreation for more information or to schedule a private event at DSN 466-2060.

2011 G/A Volksfest

April 27 to May 1: Celebrate multinational friendship at the annual German American Volksfest

Enjoy food, fun, carnival rides, live music, and much, much more at the Hohenfels Festplatz. Check the Hohenfels Happenings for schedules, bands, and more.

Box Run

April 30: Get ready for the USAG Hohenfels annual Box Run. Choose from the 10K run, 5K walk/run or 3K Kid’s Fun Run. Open to ID cardholders and their guests. Register before April 28 and pay \$10, after April 28 the fee is \$12.

Free T-shirts to the first 150 people who sign up. Check-in on race day is from 7-8:30 a.m. Race will begin at 9 a.m. Call FMWR Sports and Fitness at DSN 466-2868/2883 to register.

Beginner Kayaking

May 11-14: The first trip out on the water for the season is beginner kayakers. Learn the rivers in the area, paddling and basic skills. Outdoor Recreation has all the equipment you need, transportation and several experienced instructors.

The location will be determined depending on water levels. Call to reserve your space today at DSN 466-2060. Course Price is \$139 and includes rental, equipment, kayaking course and transportation not including the camping fees.

Schweinfurt Briefs

Easter Brunch

April 24: Enjoy brunch followed by an Easter egg hunt at the Conn Club and Pavilion. There are two seatings, at 10 a.m. and noon. Egg hunt follows at 2 p.m. The event is open to all ID cardholders and their guests. Cost is \$16.50 for adults and \$8.25 for children ages 4 to 12. Children under 3 eat free. Reservations are required by April 15. For more, call DSN 353-8398, CIV 09721-96-8398.

USAjobs.gov Workshop

April 27: Interested in working while you’re here in Germany? This class is your jumping-off point for applying for government jobs. The application system has recently changed, but this workshop will give you the tools to get a leg up. In the Yellow Ribbon Room on Ledward Barracks from April 27 from 9-11 a.m. Preregistration is encouraged. For more, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Fishing License Class

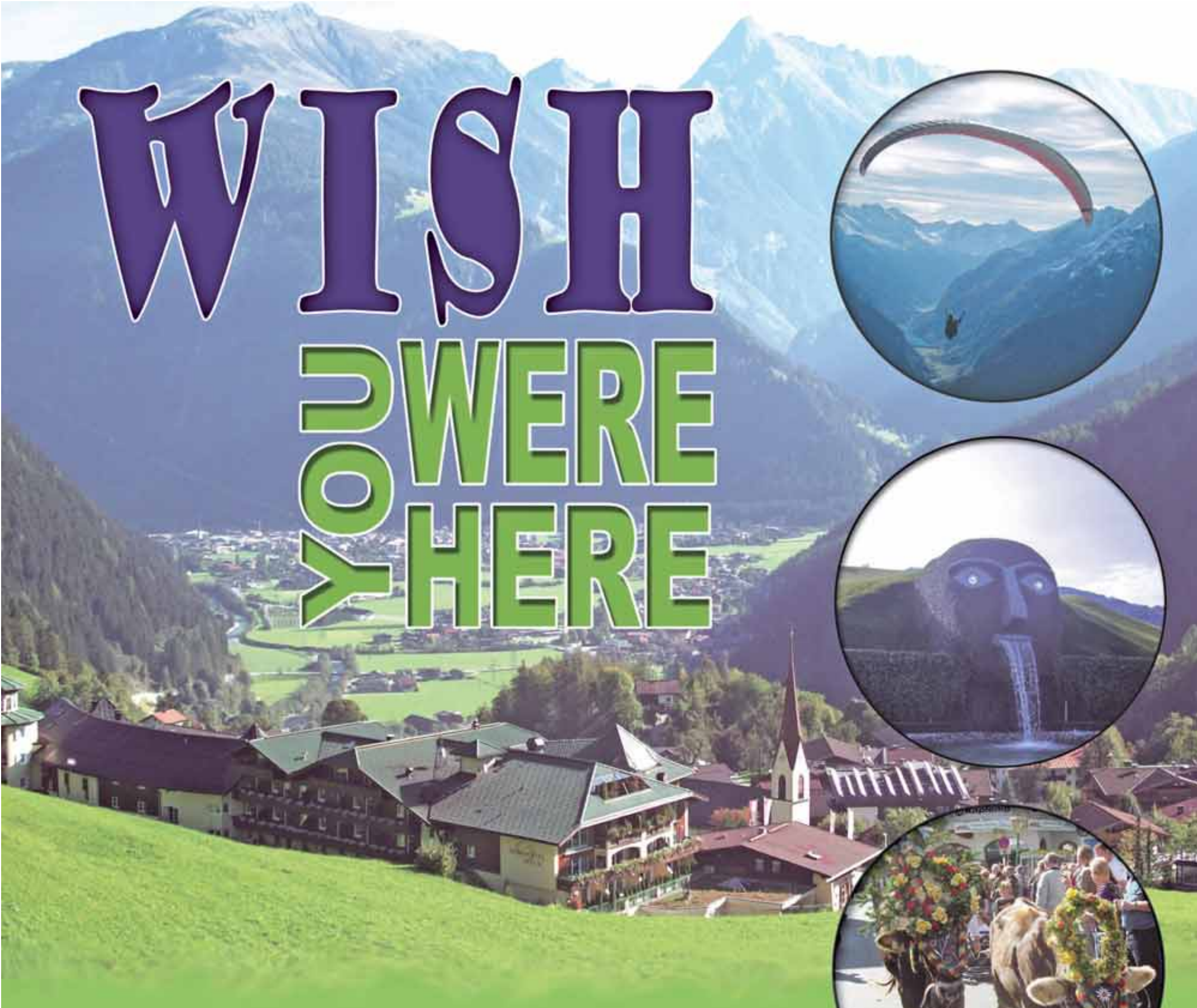
Schweinfurt Outdoor Recreation offers this weekend long class designed to get you fishing in time for the warm weather. The class is required for all U.S. ID card holders who wish to obtain a German fishing license. The cost per person is \$65. For more, call DSN 353-8080, CIV 09721-96-8080.

Spring Clean-up Time

April 7-May7: Clean out and clean up with this garrison-wide effort to beautify our community. We’ll start with a humongous community yard sale at Askren Manor April 30, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. The Extravaganza continues with a unit and barracks spring cleaning on Friday, May 6, from 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Housing coordinators and residents top it off with a family housing spring cleaning of their own on Saturday, May 7, from 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Kinderfest

April 30: Celebrate youth with this festival for children at 1 p.m. on April 30 immediately following the community yard sale). This event, which celebrates Month of the Military Child, features a parade along with free fun and games. The fest convenes at the School Age Center.



Visit picture-perfect Mayrhofen

Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

MAYRHOFEN, Austria — The town of Mayrhofen, Austria, is an outdoor enthusiasts’ dream. Whatever sport activates your adrenaline — whether it’s slaloming the slopes, rafting the rapids or even soaring the skies — Mayrhofen provides the place.

Roughly a three-hour drive from Nuremberg, Mayrhofen is the jewel of the Ziller Valley, where quaint cottages sparkle with multicolored flower baskets against the dramatic backdrop of the Alps, and locals in lederhosen brush shoulders with tourists from a dozen countries along cobblestoned streets.

Multiple outfitters offer adventure packages to suit all levels, from families with young children to die-hard adrenaline junkies. Whatever your level of expertise, Mayrhofen has trails, rivers and canyons to challenge you.

Experience a bird’s-eye view of the Alps while paragliding some 7,000 feet above the valley floor. Take off from the very spot where Paul Groeblacher became the first man to paraglide over the Alps into Italy. Groeblacher now runs Flugtaxi, which offers year-round tandem flights as long as the weather is clear.

Getting wet

Mountain Sports conducts canyoning expeditions where participants don helmets and wetsuits and traverse stunning gorges via hiking, swimming or repelling down waterfalls. Though there are routes for varying abilities, those afraid of heights may want to sign up for their rafting tours instead.

Several rivers rush through the valleys

surrounding Mayrhofen, and white water rafting provides an exhilarating experience for visitors. Trips range from family-friendly level 2 rapids to levels 4 and above for the more adventurous, depending on the season. Early season snow melt can create a significantly more challenging river. Kayaking, Canadian canoeing and tubing are also available.

Hitting the slopes

One of Mayrhofen’s main draws is skiing and snowboarding. Enjoy stunning views as cable cars carry you to the varied slopes of the Ahorn and the Penken peaks. Courses vary from easy to the steepest ski trail in Austria on the Penken. Snowshoeing and tobogganing are also popular, and equipment for everything is available for rent at the base of the mountain.

‘Gut’ grub

After sluicing up the snow, warm up with a cup of gluewein (hot, spiced wine) or a hearty “bauernbratl” (farmer’s roast) in one of the many gorgeously situated lodges.

Other local delicacies include “melchermuas,” a kind of sweet, cranberry porridge cooked like an omelet and eaten directly out of the pan, and, of course, the spicy cheese crafted at the Sennerei dairy on the edge of town. The dairy allows visitors to observe the entire operation as fresh cow’s milk is processed into cheese, whipped cream, butter and more.

Beer lovers will enjoy the rich, dark Zillertal beer, a staple in the many guest houses and restaurants. Its sweet, caramel flavor disguises a hefty alcohol content, but fortunately, the whole town is ideally situated for walking, so you can window shop on your

way back to your hotel.

Traditional goods line the streets, and hand-carved wooden items, Alpine clothing, and gear for virtually any sport is readily available. For the more extravagant shopper, the Swarovski Crystal factory is a mere 30 minutes away and features tons of delicate crystal figurines as well as a somewhat bizarre museum with pieces by the likes of Andy Warhol.

Feeling the fest

Festivals liven up the city even more throughout the year. Possibly the most notorious is the Snowbombing festival. Despite its humble beginnings, the event has evolved into a sort of “Alpine Woodstock,” with dozens of live bands and world class DJs. Beginning April 3, the weeklong party mixes music and winter sports, and this year’s festival boasts more bands and more venues than ever.

In September, experience the “Almatrieb,” where the streets are thronged with merry-makers welcoming the herds home from their summer grazing in mountain pastures.

Festooned with flowers, bells and elaborate headdresses, the cows are led through the streets by traditionally-clad ranchers to the cheers of the crowd and the blaring of “oompah” bands.

Staying in style

To accommodate the ton of tourists, Mayrhofen boasts scores of hotels, ranging from self-catering apartments to budget rooms for the cash-conscious. There are even really “cool” igloo hotels! Many places double as “wellness spas” complete with pools, saunas and massages on demand.



Background: Four valleys converge on Mayrhofen offering endless exploration opportunities. *Photos by Mark Iacampo unless otherwise noted.*

Top: Paragliders soar among the peaks above Mayrhofen, enjoying a unique view of the majestic Alps. *Photo by Mark Woehler*

Middle: The crystal giant guards the entrance to the Swarovski Crystal Museum, which is only a half hour away.

Bottom: Ornately festooned cows parade through town during the annual “Almatrieb,” where merry-makers welcome home the herd after their summer grazing.

Try Hotel Veronika, where accordion playing owner Martin Huber greets guests at the door with a welcome schnapps before conducting them to their rooms through a home so charmingly decorated with family memorabilia you’ll feel like you’re visiting your own grandmother.

Whether you seek the thrill of high-mountain adventure, the romance of moonlit sleigh rides or the cultural experience of a secluded Alpine village, Mayrhofen is not to be missed.

Honoring a hero



VILSECK, Germany — Lt. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, commander of U.S. Army Europe, presents the Purple Heart to Spc. Anthony J. Payne, Warrior Transition Unit-Delta Company, during a ceremony on Rose Barracks, March 31. Payne was awarded the Purple Heart for being wounded in action in Afghanistan in August 2010 while serving as part of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

Photo by Jennifer Walsh Cary

Soldiers refine medical skills at modern facility

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Fincham
30th MEDCOM Public Affairs

VILSECK, Germany — Entering the building you become engulfed by darkness. Thick smoke fills the air, and gunfire pierces your ears.

As your boots slip across the blood soaked floor, you find there

are bodies of injured Soldiers lying around the room. It's up to you and your battle buddy to rapidly identify the casualties' injuries, and immediately provide medical care.

These split-second decisions can make the difference between life and death.

When the mission is completed the doors of the Medical Simulation Training Center open and sunlight shines in on the numerous simulated casualties.

The Soldiers of the 30th Medical Command's 557th Medical Company (Area Support) used the state-of-the-art MSTC facility here, from March 28 to April 1, to gain valuable experience and

refine their combat medical skills.

"We wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to give our medics and combat-lifesavers some excellent real-world type training on these simulators," said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Kling, the 557th ASMC first sergeant.

During the scenarios, a combat medic was teamed up with a combat lifesaver to treat various simulated casualties. The wound-

We wanted ... to give our medics and combat-lifesavers some excellent real-world training.

Sgt. 1st Class Richard Kling
557th ASMC First Sergeant

ed Soldiers, though simulated, are able to replicate many human characteristics, according to Joe Aubihl, the lead instructor for the MSTC.

"They breathe, bleed, talk and blink. They can have unilateral or bilateral rise and fall of the chest," Aubihl explained. "They can do a lot."

These "sim-men," as they're known, give real-time feedback to the medics — a training value that simply can't be replicated elsewhere.

"This allows them to actually work on a breathing, bleeding casualty. Granted, it's not a human being, they don't move around too

See MEDICS, page 17

Environmental health team keeps Bavaria healthy

Story and photo by
Jennifer Walsh Cary
BMEDDAC Public Affairs

VILSECK, Germany — While the medic is arguably the most recognizable medical Soldier, it's actually the environmental health Soldiers that impact your way of life the most. From your lunch at the dining facility to your child's water fountain at school, the environmental health Soldiers have you covered.

"We are health inspectors for the Army," said Sgt. Cole Borton, Environmental Health noncommissioned officer in charge. "Here in garrison our main focus is food service to people on post and checking the water to make sure it's in compliance with U.S. and German standards."

Anyone who serves food on a Bavarian post is subject to inspection by the environmental health team. This includes dining facilities, AAFES vendors, Child, Youth & School Services facilities, German kantines, shoppettes, bazaar vendors and even volksfest food booths.

"We're looking at the actual sanitation of the facility and the way food is being stored, handled, prepared and served," Borton said. "It's one of those things you don't think of until you get sick and it's like, 'wow, I really wish somebody would've been wearing gloves.'"

Borton and his team routinely inspect food facilities on post and go out of their way to check event vendors. To serve food on post, a person is required to attend a food handler's course offered by the Bavaria Medical Department Activity Preventive Medicine Department.

"They'll get a certificate from us and that's good for a year to serve on any post within Bavaria," he said. "As a requirement, they should have their certificates of training onsite with them."

When the team isn't inspecting food handlers, they're busy inspecting the water on post.

"We're monitoring chlorine and bacterial content in the water," Borton said. "DPW is the one in charge of purifying and checking the water on a day-to-day basis, but what we're doing is running a check on their work to make sure they're doing everything right."



Environmental Health Soldiers Sgt. Cole Borton (left) and Spc. Jamal Harrison test samples at their lab on Rose Barracks. Each month, water on post is tested for levels of chlorine, bacteria and fluoride.

The team typically pulls 144 water samples for the Bavarian footprint to test for levels of chlorine, bacteria and fluoride each month.

Although their inspection may make some people antsy, Borton said it can be a positive experience.

"When we do an inspection we're not there just to be critical of their operation and to point out how they're doing things wrong," he said. "We're also there to help them learn from it and help them correct it. When it's done correctly, it's more of a partnership between us and the managers rather than them being dreadful of the day we walk in."

Other missions the team tackles field sanitation classes, inspecting water buffalos and when down-range; collecting bugs, gathering soil and air samples and practicing rodent and animal population control.

"Anytime someone goes to a food establishment on post, they can rest assured that the food they're getting was prepared in the most sanitary environment possible," he said.

For more information or to sign up for a food handler's class, contact DSN 476-2041, CIV 09662-83-2041.

a shot of advice

By Lt. Col. Stephen Linck
BMEDDAC

Want your health-related question answered? Send an e-mail to brmc-pao@amedd.army.mil or post your question on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/bmeddac. Your question may appear in the next edition of the *Bavarian News*.

Q: I have a recurring knee problem. Currently, I work out almost seven days a week. Every four days or so, my knee starts giving me problems. Any time I try to straighten it out completely, I can't because there's so much tension and it hurts. Eventually, it goes away and then I start the cycle over again. Am I working out too much? Or is my knee seriously messed up? Should I see a provider?

V/r,
Knee Deep in Katterbach

A: Dear Knee Deep,

I'll tell you what I tell most people; if it hurts don't do it. Simple joints that only move in one direction - elbows are much more complicated because they hinge and rotate - seem to get messed up pretty often because they absorb most of your body weight.

In order to find out what is going on I would need a lot of information. What causes it to hurt? What kind of work out do you do? What makes it feel better? Does it pop when you use it? You could have anything from bursitis to ligament damage or just overusing the joint.

I recommend making an appointment with your local primary care manager for a knee exam. The exam only takes a few minutes and can rule out ligament damage or if you need additional tests.

Q: My friend refuses to be seen at a German hospital because she doesn't understand what they're saying and doesn't think the quality of care is as good. What can I tell her to change her mind?

Respectfully,
Helper in Hahnbach

A: Dear Helper,

Tell her the German health care system provides quality health care. We don't have an Army hospital in Bavaria because we really don't need one. The health care in the German system is every bit as good as the health care in the United States, it is just different.

If language is the problem, all of our clinics have Host Nation Patient Liaisons that will assist patients if they are admitted to a hospital. They will even assist with translation for emergency room visits. Contact your local clinic for information on contacting a HNPL during and after duty hours. I have such faith in German health care that when I ruptured my Achilles tendon last summer, I had surgery in the local hospital.

I want to ask for your help. If you have suggestions on improving our HNPL service, please contact me through the BMEDDAC Facebook page or the Shot of Advice e-mail address.

Q: Any woman will tell you that every once in a while you sit on a toilet seat and find out it's wet. Is it possible to get sick from sitting in someone else's urine? Ps. If you pee on the seat, clean it up!

Thanks,
Grossed out in Grafenwoehr

A: Dear Grossed out,

Yeah, clean up after yourselves! I am not quite sure where to start on this question. It is very difficult to get "sick" from a toilet seat even if it is gross. Let me try and explain. In theory, urine is sterile unless the person before you has a urinary tract infection. That being said, bacteria lives everywhere, even on toilet seats, so it is possible to get some on your skin.

If your skin is intact, without cuts or scrapes, your skin will keep bacteria out of your body. So the answer is no. The only thing you really have a chance of catching from a toilet seat is crabs, which is pretty uncommon.

In researching this question I learned that you are more likely to get sick from a handshake than a toilet seat. You've heard me say it many times; good hand hygiene is the key to prevention. And remember, hand sanitizer has many uses.

If you need a shot of advice, e-mail your question to Lt. Col. Stephen Linck at brmc-pao@amedd.army.mil.

Community can stop child maltreatment

By Col. Theresa S. Gonzales
BDENTAC

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — To raise awareness about the impact of child maltreatment and its prevention, the blue ribbon campaign is held each year during the month of April, Child Abuse Prevention Month. Throughout the month, the community is encouraged to wear a blue ribbon to symbolize its commitment to protect children and end child abuse and neglect.

Abuse represents a spectrum of behavior. It is repetitive in nature, and fatal abuse is often preceded by minor manifestations of maltreatment which might be overlooked by physicians, dentists, teachers, social workers and others who are in frequent contact with the child.

The sad truth is that child abuse kills more children in the United States each year than do accidental falls, drowning, choking on food, suffocation and fires in the home combined. Children should never die because of our

inability to confront the possibility of abuse. Health care providers must identify children at risk, educate the families we serve and report suspected cases of abuse and neglect to the appropriate authorities.

Our lack of understanding of the complex causes of child abuse does not absolve our collective responsibility to protect those individuals at risk. As Dr. Henry Kempe so eloquently stated almost 34 years ago, "It is just not possible to worry about all of the children all of the time. There lies the frustration and total inaction as well. For each of us there must be only one child at a time."

Oral aspects of child neglect and abuse are well-known to the dental health care team. The Prevent Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness coalitions have trained thousands of dentists and auxiliaries in the recognition and

reporting of such injuries.

Craniofacial injuries occur in more than 50 percent of the cases of child abuse. Often these are unexplained injuries that are inappropriately reported by the caregiver or the clinical presentation is inconsistent with the history provided.

Other characteristics of orofacial injury in child abuse relate to the multiplicity and repetitive nature of the injuries; these injuries often appear in various stages of healing.

The face and mouth are frequent targets of abuse. Easy access to the child's head, as well as the oral cavity's role in communication and nutrition, make it particularly susceptible to abuse. Warning signs of abuse include:

- Loose or fractured teeth
- Bruises or cuts, especially near the face
- Cigarette or immersion burns
- Absence of hair from hair pulling



- Child is dressed inappropriately for the weather, such as covering bruises, etc.
- Child is frightened of parents
- Apprehensive when others cry
- Overly compliant, passive or undemanding
- Lags in development or motor skills

Neglect can be as harmful as abuse. It is defined as the failure of a parent, guardian or other caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs. Neglect may be physical, medical, educational or emotional. Warning signs of neglect include:

- Child is dirty, unkempt or displays poor oral hygiene
- Rampant cavities in a child's mouth
- Untreated pain, infection, bleeding or trauma
- Evidence of poor supervision

In Europe, all cases of suspected child neglect of abuse should first be reported to the local garrison military police by callin their duty phone or local 24 hour emergency number.

15th Engineer Battalion builds homes for animals

Story and photo by
Charles Stadlander
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

SCHWEINFURT, Germany — The Pfaendhausen Training Area here plays occasional host to Soldiers from both this garrison and visiting units who utilize the unique facilities and terrain. But there is one group of residents that finds the environment in Schweinfurt particularly appealing: the amphibians that make their home in the pristine woodlands and bodies of water within the training area.

Lothar Rueckert, the garrison's environmental specialist, says that contrary to what many would think the military training in the 6,200 acre zone — nicknamed Area Mike — actually benefits the wildlife there.

"Old tank tracks get filled in with water," said Rueckert. "Then the frogs, toads and newts can make a home." Area Mike, of which almost 90 percent is forested, is spotted with deep ruts carved out by the military vehicles that have used the dirt roads over the decades. The ruts have now become elongated shallow ponds and lush habitats in which the amphibians can lay eggs.



A coupled pair of common frogs watches over their spawning eggs in a pond in USAG Schweinfurt's Pfaendhausen Training Area. The animals, currently on Germany's watch list for vulnerable species, hatch in ponds created by the 15th Engineer Battalion before moving into the training area's woodlands.

In 2009, the 15th Engineer Battalion improved upon these "accidental habitats" by creating a series of deeper bodies of water with the intent to compensate for habitat lost through road-building in Pfaendhausen. Kathrin Poptcheva, an environ-

mental specialist who monitors the wildlife in Area Mike, said that the animals went through an adjustment period with these ponds.

"Toads and frogs come back to spawn in the same pond where they were born," said Poptcheva. "But we

moved some of these original ponds when we built roads." In many cases, the 15th Engineer's creations were deeper and better-protected than the original ponds. Poptcheva said the animals quickly grew to prefer the newly constructed habitats.

"The newts, frogs and toads realized that the compensation pond was the best habitat," she said. "The deeper water is better for the hot summer days when some of the shallower ponds dry out." And because the small ponds are new and unconnected to bigger lakes by streams, they remain free of fish, which is a natural predator of the small amphibians.

And the training was more than just an act of charity for the battalion. These dig exercises mirror combat drills in which Soldiers burrow trenches for tanks to drive down into and fire from.

The common frog is currently listed on the German "Red List" of vulnerable species. The frog is not endangered but faces the risk of extinction. The yellow-bellied toad, which spawns by the hundreds in Area Mike later in the year according to Rueckert, is classified as endangered in the state of Bavaria.

In Germany, frogs are threatened

by road-building, loss of aquatic habitat through over-development and by getting trapped in concrete buildings. These problems are almost nonexistent in the wild, untamed forests of Pfaendhausen.

Poptcheva and Rueckert started a methodical survey of the area in mid-March, searching the ponds in Area Mike under threatening gray skies and buffeted by a chill wind. The toads and newts do not spawn until the weather warms, but the common frog had already started to lay eggs in several of the ponds.

Only a few of the ponds contained the orb-like clusters of frog eggs, but Poptcheva was not daunted, maintaining confidence that the new habitats are proving successful in bolstering Pfaendhausen's animal population.

"There could be more frogs here, there could be more toads," she said. "But that's OK. There could also be none of them."



One for the environment



Photo by John Reese

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN — Diane Devens, director, Installation Management Command Europe Region, signs documents as members of the German Forest Service circulate and stamp copies of the Oeffentliche Traegerschaft, an environmental agreement between the U.S. Army, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the free state of Bavaria. Bavarian State Minister Dr. Markus Soeder signed for the state and Dr. Juergen Gebh, spokesman for German Federal Real Estate, represented the nation. This high level document advances cooperation by the Army to protect the environment on installations in Bavaria. High level representatives of the Garmisch and Grafenwoehr garrisons as well as local media were also present. After the March 30 signing ceremony in the Patton Ballroom of the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort, Devens met with garrison manager Karin Santos and the Garmisch staff officers for an impromptu Q&A session on Artillery Kaserne.

Students learn the power of a penny

By Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — For the past month, students of Hohenfels Elementary School have been searching under couch cushions and scouring car ashtrays for coins to help bring educational opportunities to underprivileged children in Central Asia through their Pennies for Peace campaign.

Pennies for Peace is a program of the Central Asia Institute (CAI) which promotes and provides education and literacy programs in regions where terrorist organizations recruit uneducated, illiterate children.

"It's kind of sad that we have a school and kids in Pakistan and Afghanistan don't have one, so we're trying to help these people out," said Timothy Ward, student council president.

In pairs or small groups, student council members spoke with the various grade levels, giving a presentation on the merits of the program and explaining that though a penny can't buy much at the Hohenfels PX, in Afghanistan it can buy a pencil, and maybe start a student on the path to a new life.

"We all grew up knowing we would go to school, and we would have the opportunity to go to college and get a job, and these kids grew up saying 'maybe I won't,'" said Virginia Warren, student council publicity manager.

"Here at Hohenfels, you can't really use pennies, because they aren't readily available," Warren added. "So we're doing coins."



Photo by Tracy Stockdale

Virginia Warren (left) and Timothy Ward explain how pennies can provide educational opportunities to children in Afghanistan and Pakistan at a presentation for the Hohenfels Elementary School's Pennies for Peace campaign.

Individual classrooms each have decorated donation jars that, according to Michaela Lefebvre, student council treasurer, "just make you want to put money in them!" The coins will be combined by grade level on April 15.

"We're calculating the donations by weight," said Tracy Stockdale, sixth-grade teacher and student council advisor. "It would be too hard to separate all the euro and American money and figure out what grade levels it came from."

"After we weigh it, we'll count it, and send out a check," said Warren.

The grade level that has collected the heaviest amount will be treated to

a party by the student council.

In addition to helping children in other countries learn, the Hohenfels Elementary students are getting an education on the culture of the nations they are aiding.

"There's a curriculum that goes with the program," Stockdale said, "so now a lot of the teachers are teaching about Afghanistan and Pakistan."

"The children really like it because they're helping the same countries that their parents are deploying to, and it's something we can do here at school to help the same kids that our parents are helping," said Stockdale.

Kontakt Club in Hohenfels celebrates 40 years of friendship

By Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany — Celebrating 40 years of bridging the gap between cultures, the Hohenfels' Kontakt Club heads into 2011 with a host of activities designed to bring Germans and Americans together in a fun and festive atmosphere.

Founded in 1969 by the U.S. Army Europe and the German Federal Ministry of Youth, Family, Women and Health, The Kontakt program gives U.S. military members, their families and civilians the opportunity to experience the rich history, traditions and customs of our local national hosts.

German/American Volksfest

At this year's German/American Volksfest held at Hohenfels' Festplatz from April 27-May 1, the

Club plans to display photographs, articles and other memorabilia that chronicle the 40 years of friendship between our Soldiers and the host nation. "It's all about having fun," said Andy Kirschenbauer, German club president.

It's also about breaking down barriers, getting rid of prejudice, and showing that despite cultural differences, we have much in common, Kirschenbauer said. The club hosts various holiday parties where the differences and customs of the two cultures can be experienced firsthand.

"We also have a Thanksgiving holiday," Kirschenbauer said, referencing the "Erntedankfest," which is primarily a rural and religious celebration. "But we like to celebrate the American holiday, too, with the turkey and everything."

"We like to show the community

what's around in the area besides the mall," said Petra Neumeier, a German member of the Kontakt Club. She said the club organizes about one trip a month to unique attractions in the area.

"We get to do a lot of fun things with the club we probably wouldn't do otherwise," said American member Priscilla Fleischer, who initially joined the Kontakt Club to make German friends.

Upcoming trips

This year's trips include a two-day adventure at the Kaltenberg Knights Tournament, where steel-clad warriors will joust for honor and glory, and a visit to Moedlareuth, or "Little Berlin," a town in northern Bavaria that was split in two by the Berlin wall.

"In 2010, we had total participa-

tion of around 3,000 people," said Kirschenbauer. "When people are new to Germany, and maybe afraid to drive or go out, come with us! We'll show you the world or Bavaria at least!"

The club boasts over 100 paying members, but participation doesn't require membership or dues.

Transportation is provided by the garrison, so trip costs are relegated to the actual cost of an activity. If a museum has a five euro entrance fee, that's the total trip cost, said Kirschenbauer.

This summer, the club plans to host a birthday barbecue bash and invite the entire Hohenfels community for burgers and steaks. The club's activities are announced in the Hohenfels Happenings as well as their Facebook page and website, www.kontaktclub-hohenfels.org.



Photo by Brigitte Kirschenbauer

Kontakt Club members Andy Kirschenbauer and Alyssa McBride enjoy the Velburg Fasching parade at a recent club outing.

April 1st goes to the dogs



Two our-legged friends introduce themselves at the grand opening of the dog park on Rose Barracks, April 1. More than 40 people and pets attended.

Canines give park a howling two paws up

Story and photos by
Nick D'Amario
Command Information Chief

VILSECK, Germany — Two dozen dogs of all shapes, breeds and sizes showed up for the April 1 opening of Rose Barracks' new dog park, located right across from the Little Mike recreation area.

The fenced-in dog park provides a friendly environment where dog owners can let their canine friends romp off-leash and socialize with their fellow quadrupeds.

Yasmine Livingston said the new dog park is "an awesome idea" and will look forward to the Grafenwoehr dog park opening since she lives in the Eschenbach area with Midnight, a Wiener and Cocker Spaniel mix.

Priscilla Nunez said the park is "good for the dogs" and having one open at Main Post will give her and Fabio, her Shitzu, the best of both worlds since she lives in Netzaberg.

Both Livingston and Nunez plan to use both parks once the Main Post dog park opens.

The Main Post Dog Park is currently under construc-



Several pets and their owners enjoy the leashless space the park provides. A similar park is scheduled to open on Main Post in mid-May.

tion and targeted for a grand opening on or about mid-May.

The concept for dog parks started with an ICE comment in August 2010 and was subsequently made into a community initiative following a community huddle hosted by Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar, commanding general, Joint Multinational Training Command, and Col. Vann Smiley, USAG Grafenwoehr commander. A Pet Working Group (PWG) was soon established, headed up by Tony Frazier, USAG Grafenwoehr business manager.

"The Garrison Pet Working Group," said Frazier, "is a group of community mem-

bers who volunteer their time to improve, promote, communicate and campaign for our local pet community. They also advocate responsible pet ownership while fostering a friendly and safe environment for pet owners.

"It is through their selfless efforts and the passionate guidance provided by Mrs. Martina Salazar that we are able to realize these important quality of life improvements for our community.

"Additional improvements planned for the Rose Barracks and Main Post dog parks include benches, separate areas for small and large dogs, spring-loaded access and more," said Frazier.



Surrounding 250 pounds of dog food and other creature comforts donated by the Grafenwoehr Military Community to the Amberg Tierheim are Soldiers from D Co., WTU-E, volunteers of the Grafenwoehr Military Community Pet Working Group, tierheim staff and other supporters.

WTU and HHC Soldiers support local tierheims

Story and photo by
Nick D'Amario
Command Information Chief

VILSECK, Germany — After the dog park opening, April 1, PWG members and Soldiers of Delta Company, Warrior Transition Unit-Europe (WTU-E) traveled to the Amberg Tierheim (animal shelter) where they presented Theo Schmausser, chairperson of the Amberg Animal Association, with 250 pounds of dog food, bedding and other creature comforts.

Donations for the Amberg Tierheim are made at the Rose Barracks commissary, while donations for the Weiden Tierheim are made at the Main Post Exchange. Through the generosity of Grafenwoehr Military Community members, D Co. Soldiers bring the donations to the Amberg Tierheim on a regular basis. Since December 2010, D Co. has up to nine Soldiers traveling to the tierheim the third Friday of each month to walk the dogs and spend quality time with their four-legged friends.

"Helping others fosters a meaningful, healthier lifestyle for our Soldiers. It shows that while we are injured, we can still contribute

to the overall mission of the Army through active community service," said Sgt. Mattice, the D Co. WTU-E squad leader.

"This exemplifies how a few Soldiers from our company can make a significant and positive contribution to the Graf military community by building new friendships and relationships with our host nation neighbors, thus improving their perception of us," said Capt. Ryan Putnam, D Co. WTU-E commander.

And later that same day, Soldiers of the HHC USAG Grafenwoehr, under the leadership of 1st Sgt. Fernando Marquez, collected and delivered donations from the Grafenwoehr Military Community for the Weiden Tierheim.

"HHC partners with the Weiden Tierheim to support their efforts in caring for abandoned pets, many which unfortunately come from our community," said Marquez. "Together, with the great donations from the Graf community, we are showing we can make a difference and further enhance our relationships between our host nation tierheims and our Grafenwoehr Military Community."

Since December 2010, donations for the Weiden animal shelter delivered by the HHC have totaled nearly \$8,000 in pet food and assorted pet supplies.

Schools join forces for cross-cultural studies

By Mark Iacampo
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

NEUMARKT, Germany — During a project as a teaching assistant in Fuerth 10 years ago, Edith Vogl brought her German high school students to study for a day at Hohenfels Middle/High School. Ever since, she has dreamed of making the connections between American and German schools a regular part of her curriculum. Her dream became a reality April 1, when HMHS and Neumarkt's Knabenrealschule (High School for boys) formed an official partnership at a small ceremony in Neumarkt.

Vogl said she grew up in Velburg near the training base and enjoyed many trips to the garrison with American friends, including visits to the high school.

"I figured the kids would definitely be interested in this and seeing how different our systems are," she said. "If you actually take them to an American school, they'll definitely remember that because it's something that many students around here don't get to experience. And I figure it's the same for the American students. They live in Germany, but they don't really know what it's like in a German high school."

Neumarkt County Commissioner Albert Loehner expressed gratitude for the initiative in expanding the partnership between the Hohenfels Military Community and the County of Neumarkt.

"I'm convinced that the best days of our good neighborhood and partnership are ahead of us," he said.

HMHS Principal Daniel Mendoza and the Knabenrealschule director Helmut Lahner are already discussing plans for cross-cultural sharing that range from sporting competitions between the schools to overnight stays with foreign families.

"I think this is a fabulous development opportunity for the kids," said Wesley D. Potter, U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels deputy commander. "They get a chance to get out of the classroom and get a chance to see how the German students work in school and the activities that they take part in."

The Knabenrealschule has partnerships with other international schools in England, Sweden and Spain where such cultural exchanges are common.

"But Hohenfels is not so far away," said Neumarkt student Daniel Dambitz.

In the past Knabenrealschule students have attended HMHS homecoming games, as well as an annual trip to watch a movie at the post theater.

Vogl recounted the excitement of one group of students that visited the garrison and were awed by the Apache helicopters and the size of American SUVs.

"The next day one of my students asked when we could take another trip to the states," she laughed.

"We really appreciate the hospitality of our American friends," Vogl said. "And we're really happy that our school can hopefully now return that hospitality."

Vogl said she wants to open up the Knabenrealschule's school educational trips to Hohenfels students, as well as allow any American students who wish to see what a German school is like to accompany one of her students to their various classes for the day.

Mendoza said planning should begin in earnest so that there is a system in place by the new school year.

"I look forward to having this partnership because I think it's important for our students," said Mendoza. "The focus is what is best for the kids, and what we're doing here today is what's best for our kids."

Tax time is not taxing at new Garmisch tax office

By John Reese
U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Public Affairs

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN — The gold and black Army streamers hadn't even hit the floor at the ribbon cutting ceremony to open the new Garmisch income tax assistance office before the first customers booked their appointments.

Although the office officially opened for business on Feb. 1, income tax specialist Susanne Miller hit the ground running and was already booked for her first week. Since then she's helped prepare 133 federal (including prior year filings) and 32 state returns.

"I was able to save the tax clients of the Garmisch community and surrounding area \$27,000 in tax preparation fees as well as get them \$199,460 back as total refunds," said Miller.

Miller, who also worked on taxes last year when the service was provided to the garrison just a few days per month, has been available week-day mornings from 8 a.m.-noon by appointment only for the duration of

tax season.

"It's been tons of fun getting to know the community family better," she said. "I've also really enjoyed working with the large retiree population, some of whom travel as far as an hour and a half to get the services they need in Garmisch."

The stateside filing deadline is April 18. Being stationed in Europe gives taxpayers a little leeway, at least for federal filings, with an automatic filing extension until June 15.

Military personnel, Department of Defense civilians and family members should check with their home states to insure the extension is automatic.

Miller advises that you don't put off filing past April 18, however, as those who owe must file by that deadline or file for an extension.

"I urge anyone in need of tax assistance to call me soon and make an appointment," said Miller.

To make an appointment, stop by Headquarters Building 203, Room 4a, between the education center and the installation pass offices, or call DSN 440-3516, CIV 08821-750-3516.



Photo by Eric Miller

DES responds to fighter relics

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN — Garmisch DES personnel responded to Starnberg on March 30 to assist local Polizei at the crash site of a World War II P51D Mustang (right). The aircraft was discovered during construction on a new house.

While the warbird is not intact, several Browning .50 caliber wing guns, the engine block and other parts of the aircraft were recovered by the Bavaria Spreng Kommando unit. Air Force historians were provided the fighter's



U.S. Air Force photo serial numbers in an attempt to identify the aircraft.

Early findings suggest that the aircraft was shot down in 1945 and that the pilot survived and was later captured. A follow-up story on what happened to the pilot will be done when the details surface.

Hertling to bolster partnerships with allies

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Through his assignment as commander of the Joint Multinational Training Command, from September 2004 to August 2005, followed by an assignment as the USAREUR chief of operations and training, Hertling has been involved in USAREUR's unique role in building allied and partner nations' capacity to operate together in coalitions with the U.S.

Hertling said that America's traditional allies have evolved and become even stronger. He also finds the development of new relationships and alliances, some of whom "used to be on the other side of a wall or a fence," inspiring.

That inspiration will be put into action during Hertling's tenure at USAREUR.

"We will continue to find ways to strengthen partnerships with old and new allies," Hertling said, "especially as we recognize the ever evolving security environment faced by the United States, Europe and the world."

Hertling experienced the development of enduring partnerships during his most recent tour of duty in Europe. He served as the commanding general



Lt. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, U.S. Army Europe commander, and his wife Sue are greeted by the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp during their first official visit to Hohenfels, March 30.

Photo by Paul Boehm

of 1st Armored Division from May 2007 to May 2009, which included his third deployment with the division to Iraq.

The headquarters of 1st Armored Division returned from Iraq in Novem-

ber 2010, and is in the process of moving to Fort Bliss, Texas, as part of U.S. Army Europe's ongoing transformation process that began in 2003.

Since 2003, USAREUR has reduced its size by one third, from 62,000

Soldiers to about 42,000 today. In addition, USAREUR has planned, and Installation Management Command-Europe has executed, the closure of nearly half of the 239 sites the Army in Europe had in 2003.

As some of the final actions from that 2003 plan begin to unfold, including the consolidation of the headquarters in Wiesbaden, USAREUR is better postured to respond to the wide range of challenges emerging in the 21st century.

Hertling said he monitored the planning of USAREUR's transformation and participated in the early stages of executing the plan. He sees moving forward with that plan as one of his missions.

"We will continue with the transformation of our Army in Europe, while providing trained Soldiers and units for combatant commanders as they face an increasingly demanding operational environment," Hertling said.

After listing the challenges, including transformation, USAREUR will face in the coming months, Hertling signaled his readiness to take them on.

"Given all this, there is no place on earth Sue and I would rather be."

Diversity benefits everyone

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understand people and the environments where they live. A more adaptive and culturally astute force will enhance our ability to operate in these environments. Training, educating and preparing culturally adaptive leaders who are able to meet global challenges because of their ability to understand varying cultures will continue to help the Army achieve mission readiness.

We can even look at diversity as a survival issue for our all volunteer force. As our population changes, the Army must look at ways to recruit and retain the changing talent pool. It is important that our Army continues to be a place where men and women of different backgrounds, cultures and ideas and beliefs know and understand that they are valued members at every level.

You can promote and sustain diversity by creating and maintaining an inclusive environment. An inclusive environment, where employees feel valued, can lead to reduced personnel costs, enhanced teamwork, increased innovation and higher quality performance. Understanding the human dimension of leadership and managing your talent pool will lead to increased mission readiness.

Now, let's talk about what diversity is not. Diversity is not about the Equal Opportunity or Equal Employment Opportunity programs, although those programs have been and will continue to be vital components in providing diversity in opportunity. Diversity is not some Affirmative Action program or a way to reach minority quotas. It is not just about demographics or the color of your skin; it is about what every individual in your organization can bring to the table.

Finally, diversity is definitely not a stand-alone program. It is already a part of who we are, as an Army, and how we operate. We are already the most diverse and effective fighting force in the world.

Clinic teaches football basics

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my feet," he said. "This clinic will definitely make me a better quarterback for high school football next year."

While some participants currently play on an organized football team, many were on the field for the first time, including 9-year-old Denzel Washington.

The shy Washington blocked lightly and listened intently to the instructors, learning the essence of the game with each passing hour.

When given the ball, however, he let loose on the field, carrying a hefty smile and zigzagging through fellow players. Washington said he learned a lot about the game the first day but it wasn't all hard work.

"Mostly we just had fun," said Washington.

While the Frankfurt Universe offered their unique skills to community members



Young football players participate in a game with guidance from the Frankfurt Universe American football team during a two-day football clinic.

during the Month of the Military Child, a few players also got a taste of home.

"When I was younger I remember looking up to those older players who influenced me and inspired me," said quarterback Ian Mitchell, one of two Americans who play for the Frankfurt Universe.

"It's great to give back to the community and I'm glad I can do the same for these kids in an environment that feels like home."

The garrison, Department of Defense Dependents Schools, CYSS and the Frankfurt Universe American Football team sponsored the clinic.

Neumarkt neighbors enjoy good relations

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"This is the first step towards formalizing our partnership and finding ways we can help support each other," Quarles said. "It's really refreshing and exciting to have this opportunity presented to us."

Neumarkt County Commissioner Albert Loehner said that while the garrison has always enjoyed good relations with the surrounding communities, he is looking forward to expanding their association.

That expansion reached what Loehner called "a milestone in our development" with a partnership between the Hohenfels Middle/High School and the Neumarkt Knabenrealschule (High School for Boys).

Velburg's Mayor Bernhard Kraus said that in the past the training center had sometimes been viewed as an obstacle, but over time it has become a bridge to other counties.

Uwe Krappitz, managing director of the regional development firm Regina GmbH, said meetings are planned in April and May to discuss how the collaboration could be improved and strengthened within the domestic economy.

"We're meeting in April to discuss the potential to rejuvenate housing markets outside the gate," Quarles said. "We need additional options for community members so they have short lines of travel, good locations, and modernized homes that meet everyone's needs."

He added that development plans are in the works for a 16-home subdivision for off-post housing.

"We're excited about investment opportunities for our partners off-post," he said. "It's a win-win situation for everyone."

"The promise of working together in the future is really profound, and quite honestly, exciting," said Quarles.

Housing issues being worked

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The biggest recent boost to the crowded housing situation here is the addition of over 100 off-post government leased units for families. These residences, located in Schweinfurt, Geldersheim and Poppenhausen, have already bolstered the housing supply and helped many people on waiting lists to find homes more quickly.

For those not familiar with off-post government leased housing, they are apartments, duplexes and houses located within German society. They are contracted through the garrison's DPW, so tenants do not have a German-speaking landlord, rent or utilities to worry about.

Despite these gains, the expected number of new families still significantly outnumbers the new housing units. In order to cope with the quickly growing demands of the burgeoning community here, the housing office needed an additional, more immediate solution, and decided to get creative.

In recent weeks, German-language radio stations have been running commercials produced by USAG Schweinfurt. The commercials, in German, ask for prospective

landlords in the Schweinfurt area to contact Army housing about entering the database of available private rentals for U.S. military personnel. Since the commercials began, more than 40 landlords have made their properties available for private leasing to members of the Army community in search of housing. This number continues to grow every day.

To help pair new community members with this wealth of residences, the housing office has authorized Soldiers and their families who would otherwise be waiting for a spot on-post to rent from these private landlords. Often, these rentals are integrated within the city of Schweinfurt or nearby villages, near government-leased or other American personnel renting privately. By choosing one of these privately rented units, families in hotels awaiting openings may be able to move into their new home more quickly and begin their settling-in process here in Schweinfurt.

Sharan Dockery, the chief of housing here, stresses that the best way to get out of temporary lodging and into your new home is to be proactive about your search. Housing is

Medics prepare for real trauma

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much. But it's getting away from the days of putting tape on someone's arm saying that they have an amputation or chest wound," Aubihl said.

The 557th ASMC, the only area support medical company in Europe, is designed to simultaneously provide level I and II medical care. The MSTC instructors and the noncommissioned officers of the 557th worked together to adapt the training to the unit's unique mission.

"We created this circular lane that goes from point of wound care, to tactical field care, to level II echelon care and evac," said Aubihl.

For the combat medics, the training is both challenging and beneficial.

"The stress level helps us to learn how to work through things under difficult circumstances," said Pfc. Lashun Douglas, a 557th ASMC combat medic. "When I first went through I was all over the place. The more times I go through, I've gained some confidence and focus."

The experience of working on responsive patients is priceless, and the MSTC facility allows the Soldiers to repeatedly practice processes and steps that will save lives.

"Imagine if they can put in a (chest tube) 100 times before they have to put a real one in. Repetition is the key to adult learning, and you get to do it here," said Capt. Avery Walker, a doctor at the Stuttgart Army Health Clinic. "Yeah, it's going to be a little different and a little more



Spc. Christopher Higgins, a combat medic with the 557th Medical Company (Area Support), secures a tourniquet on a simulated casualty at the Medical Simulation Training Center in Vilseck, Germany, March 30.

intense in real life, but they'll be able to just fall back on the training that they've had."

"They need to be able to do this in their sleep and coming out here makes it that much easier," said Walker.

The 557th ASMC, headquartered in Wiesbaden, Germany, was in the area providing medical support during the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade's mission rehearsal exercise at the Joint Multinational Training Command in Grafenwoehr and Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels.